

Andy Walker

I've been looking for some inspiration for this month's column, but I can't seem to find any. There seems to be a lack of stations on 48 metres on a Sunday, and I don't understand why. Apart from the regular stations which broadcast every month, the lack of irregular broadcasts are noticable. This, some have said, is due to the lack of listener's letters, which is a real 'downer' for the operators, some of who stand in a wet and cold field for a number of hours after which, no mail is received at the station. This would discourage operators from putting out more regular transmissions. At least Saturday night broadcasts are doing well by a few stations who 'tune up the rig' to battle through the noise, one of which is Weekend Music Radio from Scotland who give a good signal here in London. Talking of good signals, Radio 48 must go to the top of the splatter list for the worst splattered signal from a free radio tx, which is a great annoyance to at least one SW operator!!

Atlantic 252, which is the nearest thing we've got to a legal free radio station, claim they've attracted an audience of 1.5 million after just two months on the air. This could double and possibly quadruple when they start heavy advertising in the south-east of England later this year. They seem to have ILR on the run, which is a good thing. Of course the other piece of good news is that Caroline's back, who would have thought after 6 weeks she would return. Hiding studio equipment in the bows of the ship was a good move by those on board, which must make the Dutch PTT and British DTI feel 'mugged-up'. It has been said the 'Landwood' has been reported to be back out there to 'have a look', let's hope that's all they do.

Finally a reliable source informed me of the sad news that Barrie and Ruth are no longer together due to a degree absolute. I would like to wish them all the best in their new lives, and even though 'Weekly Report' took a bit of a bashing by some of it's readers, I think we all miss that long brown envelope dropping on the mat every week.

ACTIVITY MAGAZINE - November 1989

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ACTIVITY MAGAZINE

RADIO MIRAGE

Q.S.L.

To Pete

QSL No136

England:No21

Date 6 August 1989

Times 1117 UTC 1130

Freq 6.280 kHz

Sinpo ?

Tx 30 Watts

Ant Half Wave Dipole

V/S Ian Page.

73's



Hi ! Firstly, thanks to all of you who took the time to contribute news to this issue of ACTIVITY, it is very much appreciated. Due to a lack of time, the mag was a little 'thrown together' as to get it out on time but we hope it's okay. This looks like being one of the biggest mail-outs of ACTIVITY and we'd like to welcome all the recent new readers who found the mag after RT and WR closed down. Publications-wise, there is a new one out of Lincoln (NE England) although we don't have any fine details but BRI advertised it on their recent 4th Sunday broadcast. Rainbow Radio Germany produce 'Free Radio Disaster' irregularly and this is sent out to the people who write to the station, it's all short wave and quite interesting. 'FRS Goes DX' is still going and has a shortwave round up as well.

Propagation News Roger Davis

Shortwave propagation report for November: Conditions on the bands continue to be mostly favourable, with sunspot counts remaining around the 180 mark we can expect strong stable signals to prevail during November. 28, 24, 21 and 18 MHz will be ideal for long distance DXing also 14, 10, 7 and 6 MHz will continue to be favourable. North American tests from the UK will be possible during November, best times for this between 02:00 and 08:00. One small problem may be noticed this month on 6 MHz especially is an increase of noise on the bands which may be more noticable before 10:00 and again after 13:00. Looking back to August quickly, some extreme sunspot counts were noted that month, on 5th August a very high sunspot count was noted reaching 227 but in contrast on 28th August only 50 was noted. Finally, the rating for November is Good.

ACTIVITY MAGAZINE is compiled and published each month and features all the latest news on the shortwave free radio scene. The deadline for contributions is the last Saturday of the month..... ACTIVITY, 3 Greenway, Harold Park, Romford, Essex, RM3 0HH, Great Britain.

STATION NEWS

THE SHORT WAVE STATIONS (October 1989)

GREAT BRITAIN Atlanta Radio made their first broadcast in several months on Sun 8th and during this, Mark Stafford announced it could be their last due to lack of response and the upcoming new radio bill, however, the actual response since to this broadcast has been so good it seems to have given Mark a change of heart and he now sees the station going on for the time being, the 8th Oct broadcast produced 65 letters!! Programmes included radio news on 'Soundabout' and also the very first airing of the new RBL tape documentary, 'No man shall ever forget August 19th 1989', all about the raid on Caroline a few months ago. Two frequencies were used by Atlanta, 6219 and 6287, but these were spluttering at least 15 KHz up and down the band here.

Radio Atlantis Shortwave appear about as often as the above station, that is a few times a year. This past Sunday they were active on 6202 with a fine, clean signal, amongst the output were 'Mailbox' with Johnnie Diamond and a show from Nick Thomas. Promos are still being aired for the station's video which features the Atlantis crew out and about etc, it costs ten pounds but for better details write to them via Ashton-under-Lyme.

Britain Radio Int'l carried out their two scheduled broadcasts during October (8th and 22nd) on 6232, on the latter broadcast we listened to 'BRI Radio File' with Steve West and 20 mins of the 'Chart Climbers Show' hosted by Jayne. Roger's just built a 'monster' 100 watt transmitter and hopes to use it occasionally.

Radio Confusion Int'l were active early Sun 1st from 23:45 until 02:05 on 6308 with the 'Late Night Connection' presented by Steve Midnight. Fairly good signals were noted here and they also managed to get into Scandinavia with varying strength. The station hasn't been heard since and are planning to return in November, possibly with a broadcast on 41 metres.

Radio East Coast Commercial are still heard regularly on 6815 and this sometimes in parallel with 11513, giving the station a wider coverage. Not much seems to change with RECC, so not much to report on, times are still Suns 11:00 to 14:00. Your host: Norman Nelson.

Falcon Radio continue with their early Sunday 6870 broadcasts and must appeal to early risers who often find they have nothing else to listen to. Falcon can be reached by PO Box 109, Northampton, England.

Radio 48 were active earlier than usual on Sun 8th between 09:00 and 10:30 on 6280, this broadcast has so far resulted in 14 letters being received. On Mon 16th just before 20:00, 48 op Howard Bell transmitted a carrier briefly on 7390 for test purposes, this was duly heard here and Howard's hoping to run a different station on 41 metres and this might have a 'louder' format (to break through the night time static!?) and higher power than the usual 20 watts. Next 48m band transmission for Radio 48 though will be in mid-November with programmes expected from Mark Stafford and Ian Scott. Contact is via 32 Victoria Road, Salisbury.

Free Medway Town Radio expect to be back via their own transmitter soon!!! FMTR were of course, the most active shortwave station back in 85/86 when they were on weekly for several hours. This prompted a DTI raid in October 86 though and the station has been in relay-mode ever since and has only been heard occasionally. Regarding the return, firstly test transmissions will be made to find a suitable frequency for the comeback, reception reports are welcomed at FMTR, 231 Loose Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 7DR. When they officially restart, Brian Richards will be joining them and his relay project, Star Int'l, will cease programming. Good luck!!

Freesound Int'l surprised us on Sunday by appearing on 6233, in the last several months 6266 has been used, often resulting in terrible utility 'pulse' interference and it has been suggested they should have called themselves Radio Pulsar!! But we hope they try and stay on 6233 or another clear frequency for their future broadcasts.

Radio Gemini appeared for the first time since July on Sunday using 6220, this seemed to clash with a LSB station at times. Coming up this Sunday, 5th November, the station expects to be active with an early morning test on 48m to North America.

Radio Gloria Int'l has been very active in October, much of the time with tests but a few programmes have gone out. Op Alan Hayes would like us to point out that the tx power is actually 30-35 watts and that the RF problems mentioned last issue were actually due to mic impedance and not a low antenna. Some work has been carried out on the tx and the antenna is an inverted V at 18-40 feet above the ground. Frequency is usually 6315 and letters go to 23 South Beechwood, Edinburgh.

Radio Laser Int'l returned to the air Sun 1st after a 3-month break because of the DTI raid back in June, a further broadcast was made Sun 22nd and it seems the new frequency is 6209. Announcements have been made claiming the location as the north and then the midlands but we think this is just to try and mislead certain people.....

Radio Mirage confirmed to us in a letter this month that they do indeed broadcast from Britain despite the address in Norway. Op Ian Page says the 25m broadcasts (mentioned a few months ago in ACTIVITY) encountered problems with the tx and antenna so never went out, but it's hoped that all problems will be resolved for future tests on that band. Here too, the night time signals from a shortwave free radio station (August: 6235 overnight) found their way into the Nordic countries.

RADIO MIRAGE

Radio Orion continue to be active on 6300, mostly on Sundays these days, during the first part of the month the 'Big O' were heard with weak signals and we're sure this was due to a new antenna system being tested. But in recent weeks reception is back to the usual good strength. Mike Wilson, Rod Lucas and 'GRQ Hard Rockin' have all been noted this month.

Radio Pamela hope to be back soon... but in different hands, Richard Grahame will now put the station together and feels he has the 'right' to activate the station again because 1- Pamela were named after his daughter 2- Richard still has all the jingles, info and so on. He also supplied Steve Most with equipment. Radio Pamela will be relayed on shortwave by Radio Waves, Freesound Radio and Jolly Roger Radio, a FM tx is local to Portsmouth on 104 MHz. The format will be "classic hot hits" and two addresses will be in use: BP 130, 92504 Rueil-Malmaison Cedex, France and 10 Bromyard Crescent, Paulsgrove, Portsmouth, PO6 3JP. Good luck to Richard for this one!! For those who don't remember, Radio Pamela used to be a very active station on SW and MW, they were operated by Steve Most and disappeared suddenly, being last heard in September 88. We've been told Steve had many personal troubles, hence the sudden disappearance.

RFM has been relaying their FM programmes onto shortwave 6317 throughout October, sometimes the tx is left on into the afternoon, the FM service runs to around 00:00 but it is rare for the shortwave to do the same.

Total Control Radio have again been inactive for a second month but this weekend saw things start to move again. A transmission was planned on Saturday night but technical problems prevented TCR from taking to the air. Sunday night another test was prepared but again were sunk by tech problems. These appear to be minor problems though so get ready to hear TCR on a Sat night soon (perhaps this Sat 4th Nov) from around 23:00 on 48 metres.

Weekend Music Radio were testing on Sun 8th early on from 07:00 to 09:00 on both 6240 and 15 MHz, Friday night 6th saw a short broadcast to tell listeners about the tests of US station, Samurai Radio, to Europe. We think Jack is still active on 15 and now 21 MHz but no details are at hand. Seemingly a quiet month for WMR. New stickers are available from Cambridge, replacing the old and out of date 7340 versions.

Wonderful Free Radio London have sent us a playing card for the 'WFRL Music Game' which will be taking place in January. Each card has sixteen record titles and the holder has to listen to WFRL (7th/14th Jan) and cross off a title as they hear it, cross off all sixteen and you stand to win a prize!! Cards are available from WFRL at Hunstanton. Onto the station's activity in October now, the usual 1st and 2nd Sunday broadcasts went out, added to these was a special night time transmission on Sat 7th between 22:00 and 00:00 with an AOR show presented by Andy Walker. Frequency to find WFRL?? 6275 KHz.

THE CONTINENT Clandestine Listener's Club Germany were relayed on 7490 during October (15th and 22nd), the first broadcast was the English service 'CLCG Int'l' with Steve Young with oldies, radio news and another of 'Johnnie Walker's Offshore Memories', plus the 'Flashback Star Portrait' featuring the Hollies. A week later, a German language programme went out with indie and dance music.

Radio East Coast Holland transmitted on 7365 Sun 8th with an excellent signal and a programme of rock music, Steve Miller, Alice Cooper and Genesis all were heard. A promo for 'Greenpeace' was also noted. Tx power on this broadcast was 200 watts.

Free Radio Service Holland should return to the air after a break on the 3rd Sunday in November on 7310, new promos and jingles have been made up, plus new ideas have been thought up. In December, FRSH expect to broadcast for 5 or 6 hours with the special Christmas programmes.

Radio Karibu Int'l were heard on Sun 1st during the morning on 6316 with fair reception. Early Sun 8th they were noted at 00:05 on 6209 with a poor signal. This one operates out of West Germany presumably.

KBC Radio received some 50 letters for their return broadcast back in late August and the station has since broadcast again in late September. 7312 is the frequency used, power is 50 watts into an inverted V antenna. KBC, PO Box 725, Arnhem, Holland, is the address.

Radio Normaal have replied to our recent letter concerning their broadcast in mid-September, op Jan says Normaal has been on the air for over 3 years and uses 10 watts into a multi-band trap dipole. Programmes are "semi-nonstop music with oldies alternated with hit music".

Radio Orang Utan were heard this past Sunday on 6206 with a fine signal, the "Golden Oldies Show" was in progress, this seems to consist of more obscure oldies, some even from Dutch groups.

Pirate Freaks Broadcasting Service appeared towards the end of the month on 41m (7481 and 7491 have been used), Suns 22nd and 29th plus Sat 28th, possibly 21st as well. This past Sunday PFBS celebrated their 4th anniversary with greetings from people such as Peter Verbruggen, power is announced as 25 watts and good signals are noted.

Radio Wahnsinn inform us that their broadcast back in early September was relayed by a Dutch station, in the future they hope to get their own transmitter. Next transmission from Wahnsinn is expected this Sun 5th Nov on 41m, presumably via relay again.

Rainbow Radio Germany were active on Sat 30 Sept (night) on 6315 but this seems to have been the last of their night time broadcasts for the time being as they have not been heard since. This might be due to worries about raids, since RRG had a tx stolen recently from their site. Op Josef says that often in his town he sees a yellow car with antenna standing on top next to the post office, and therefore decides to abandon a planned broadcast.

Radio Waves Int'l continue to be heard each Sunday on 7441, although the modulation is a little low at times. RWI announced during their 22nd Oct broadcast that they hope to be on "all night" on Friday 10th November, so presumably this will be in the 48m band??

Voice of the Netherlands were active on Sun 1st on 7490 once again producing a "powerhouse" signal, although this should be no surprise since the power is often around 500 watts. Earlier on, after 02:00 on the same day, VOTN were QSOing with Confusion and were here claiming 500 watts.

IRELAND Jolly Roger Radio are still heard regularly Sun mornings and at the start of October could still be heard Sat nights but nothing on this latter aspect was heard for the rest of the month.

Ozone Radio Int'l were heard on Suns 8th and 15th on 6820, on the latter we noted Prince Terry with oldies and 'green' talk after midday, fair signal noted.

SCANDINAVIA There have been a couple of stations noted from Finland during October: Radio Bristol on Sun 1st on 6233 and also Radio Mayday on the 15th and 22nd on 6275. These were noted in Turku, Finland, by new reader Risto, he goes on to clear up a mystery... our UNID night timer on 6236 was in fact Radio Meteor who duly received reports from Sweden and West Germany for their trouble. They can be contacted via the Free Radio Service Finland but no station name should be put on the envelope. Write to: FRSF, PO Box 82, SF-40101 Jyväskylä, Finland. Radio Meteor plans further night time broadcasts this year. Risto also hears stations from further south, night logs in October had Confusion, VOTN and a few UNIDS (6275 on Sat 7th was WFRL). During the day he's heard VOTN, East Coast Holland, CLCG and some more UNIDS. Jolly Roger has also been heard in Turku at night.

MISCELLANEOUS Scottish Free Radio Service broadcast more taped stations in October: Radio Stella Int'l, WABC (live??) and FMTR. Probably comes out of Ireland but you can never be absolutely sure. The SFRS tx has made it to North America again, this time they were a tentative in the States early on Sun 8th between 02:55 and 05:15 on 6319. For our friends over at PiPa we feel we can confirm that your listener heard the Stella broadcast, they were noted at ACTIVITY too earlier on that night just after 00:00 BST playing 60s oldies and the tape went overnight. Address: RSI, 23 South Beechwood, Edinburgh, EH12 5YR, Scotland. Jock Wilson is the person behind Stella.

Please note: All times in this issue up to Sunday 29th Oct are BST, from Sunday they are UTC.....

SOVIET UNION Long time readers may remember that we carried a short item on this about a year ago. Then we told you about the existence of Soviet free radio stations on the ham 160m band and the possibility of being fined around £250 if they're caught. Further news on the subject arrived recently via RN's 'Media Network' show, a Soviet DXer said that most stations are based in industrial areas but don't last long!! They are called 'Radio Hooligans' (we think that's what he said!!) and usually play pop music. Our DXer also mentioned that Soviet listeners now have access to digital readout sets and sometimes can hear free radio stations from the west, usually those who live near the Baltic Sea.

MYSTERIES Who is behind 6520?? The frequency of 6520 has been carrying programmes of both Radio Luce and Radio Waves during October but who owns the transmitter?? Nobody seems to know, perhaps it's time for yet another letter. Here's the rest of the mystery stations for the month of October, anyone with the solution??

Sat 30 Sep 6209 at 13:40... test, "Wind beneath my wings" heard, good signal.

Sat 30 Sep 6233 at 13:50... test with 60s and 70s rock music and an excellent signal.

Sat 30 Sep 6299 at 14:24... test, Caroline recordings from 1979, another excellent signal.

Sat 7th Oct 6207 at 19:48... a good signal.

Sun 8th Oct 7440 at 12:09... via RWI with tapes of Irish station, Energy 103.

Sat 14th Oct 6235 at 12:30... continuous music.

Sun 15th Oct 6235 at 12:03... Sud West Radio??

MEDIUM WAVE ROUND UP Just a few items... Friday, 29th September - Micheal of ILRS Germany heard non-stop music at 00:10 on 1620 KHz with a SINPO 32323. In between the music he heard an announcement in German. The next night they were on again, Micheal thinks it could have been Radio Gunnasex, he feels sure it wasn't Radio Int'l Verona from Italy who were heard on the frequency a few nights later. Sat 21 Oct: We had a UNID at 23:37 on 1619 KHz, pop music and female DJ. We said it was just a few...

STATIONS HEARD THIS PAST WEEKEND - 28/29 October 1989

Saturday, 28th October

6270 KHz... Radio Santana (QSO) at 14:45 - 3 -
 6320 KHz... Radio Stella Int'l (via SFRS) at 22:30 - 2 -
 7491 KHz... PFBS at 12:53 -4/5-

Sunday, 29th October

6202 KHz... Radio Atlantis Shortwave at 12:25 - 5 -
 6206 KHz... Radio Orang Utan at 09:55 - 5 -
 6220 KHz... Radio Gemini at 10:09 - 5 -
 6230 KHz... Jolly Roger Radio at 11:31 - 2 -
 6233 KHz... Freesound Radio at 10:40 - 5 -
 6239 KHz... Radio Waves Int'l at 09:36 - 3 -
 6300 KHz... Radio Joystick (via Orion) at 10:41 - 5 -
 6300 KHz... Radio Orion at 12:00 - 5 -
 6300 KHz... WR (FM relay via Orion) at 15:00 - 5 -
 6315 KHz... Radio Gloria Int'l at 12:31 - 4 -
 6317 KHz... RFM (FM relay) at 11:08 - 3 -
 6320 KHz... WABC (FM relay??) at 09:39 - 3 -
 6520 KHz... Radio Luce at 09:25 - 4 -
 6815 KHz... Radio East Coast Commercial at 11:11 - 5 -
 6870 KHz... Falcon Radio at 08:10 - 2 -
 7441 KHz... Radio Waves Int'l at 11:23 - 2 -
 7491 KHz... PFBS at 10:46 - 5 -
 11513 KHz... Radio East Coast Commercial at 11:12 - 5 -

NORTH AMERICAN FREE RADIO NEWS Another quick round-up of highlights as we have some space..... As the 'fall' arrives a few new stations have taken to the airwaves, starting with Hope Radio who were first heard Sat 7th Oct via their home-made 100 watt transmitter. Also new is East Coast Pirate Radio, they first appeared on Sun 1st Oct and again use 100 watts. WTNU are new, first broadcast came Sat 30th Sep. Elsewhere, the United Blues Network play blues music, a nice variation for listeners, Zodiac Radio still seem to be active from the west coast, Radio USA and their "leaky bathtub" haven't sunk yet, veterans Zeppelin Radio Worldwide are rumoured to be returning. And that is all we have room for.....